THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, the 17th March 1955.

The House met in the Council Chamber, Fort St. George, at three of the clock, Mr. Chairman (THE HON. DR. P. V. CHERIAN) in the Chair.

I.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

STARRED QUESTIONS

Declaration of 21st January 1955 as a public holiday

* 228 *Q.*—SRI V. GURUNANDAN ROW : Will the Hon. the Chief Minister be pleased to state the reason for declaring 21st January 1955 as a public holiday in the City of Madras?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM (on behalf of the Hon. the Chief Minister) :—" 21st January 1955 was declared a public holiday in the City of Madras as the lower paid staff in the City offices would have found it difficult to reach their offices in time on that day, due to the heavy rush of traffic on account of the commencement of the open session of the Indian National Congress at Avadi and also due to the dislocation of traffic in the morning of that day on account of the visit of Marshall Tito to the City and his State drive through the City."

SRI V. GURUNANDAN ROW :—" Sir, may I ask whether any representations were made to Government to have it declared as a holiday? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" I do not think, Sir, that the Government had any representation like that."

SRI V. GURUNANDAN ROW :—" Is it the policy of the Government, Sir, to assist people to go to a political conference by declaring a holiday for that purpose? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" In view of that holiday, Saturday, the 19th March 1955, which would otherwise be a holiday, being the penultimate Saturday of the month, has been declared to be a working day for the City Government offices. I do not think that there is any such policy pursued by the Government that they should declare holidays as they please. But I may remind the hon. Member that such holidays are declared even for cricket matches."

SRI V. GURUNANDAN ROW :—" Is it not a fact, Sir, that the declaration of a holiday on the 21st January 1955 assisted

people in going to this political conference of a political party, even though they may be the ruling party? Is it not for a political purpose that this holiday was declared? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" The holiday might have assisted people in going to the Congress session. Even without a holiday thousands of people would have attended and the hon. Member could not have helped it. But that was not with that idea the Government declared a holiday."

SRI V. GURUNANDAN ROW :—" Did the Government servants attend the Congress session? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" Sir, the Government did not take any action in order to enable Government servants to attend the Congress session. But I cannot say that no Government servants attended the Congress session."

SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN :—" Sir, I want to know which of the two statements of the Leader of the House is correct. When a holiday was declared for cricket matches, was it to enable the officials to have a chance to go and see the match, or was it purely to regulate the traffic in the City? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" The answer I gave to the original question is an answer to this question also so far as it relates to the Government action in declaring a holiday."

SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN :—" Sir, would it not have been better to have issued a statement that this holiday was given just to regulate the traffic to the Avadi Congress session? Otherwise, apart from the fact whether it is right or wrong, there will be room for people to say that this holiday was given by Government to enable Government servants to attend the Congress session."

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" I do not think there was any room for such feeling. But if certain people have all kinds of feelings, the Government cannot help in the matter."

SRI V. GURUNANDAN ROW :—" Sir, is there any principle on which public holidays are declared? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" Sir, there is no particular principle involved. I have instanced the case of Government declaring a holiday for the purpose of enabling people to attend cricket tournaments."

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SRI V. GURUNANDAN ROW :—" If another political party should hold a conference, will Government declare a holiday for people to attend that conference? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" If that situation arises, the Government will examine and see whether there would be justification for declaring a holiday."

SRI K. BHASHYAM :—" Is it not a fact, Sir, that in these cases, where a large number of people are expected to attend a particular conference or show, the Government examine the case and declare holidays for the citizens of Madras to attend it? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" The Government need not declare a holiday as such for the purpose of affording convenience to the citizens."

SRI K. BHASHYAM :—" Is it not a fact, Sir, that the holiday was compensated for by making another holiday a working day? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" Yes, Sir. That was exactly so. I just now mentioned that the 19th of March 1955 (Penultimate Saturday of March 1955) would be a working day in lieu of that holiday."

Laying of underground drainage pipes for Avadi Session

* 229 *Q.*—SRI V. GURUNANDAN ROW : Will the Hon. the Minister for Health be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether underground drainage pipes were laid at Avadi for the Indian National Congress Session by Government;

(*b*) if so, the total length to which the underground drainage pipes were laid;

(*c*) the cost involved in laying the underground drainage pipes; and

(*d*) whether the Indian National Congress contributed any amount to the Government towards the cost of laying such underground drainage pipes and, if so, how much?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" (*a*) No, Sir.

" (*b*) *to* (*d*) Do not arise."

SRI V. GURUNANDAN ROW :—" Sir, are the Government aware that additional pipe lines were laid at all at Avadi? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The Congress authorities at Avadi made their own arrangements with Messrs. Gannon Dunkerley & Co., Ltd., for additional sewer lines to connect them with the existing line in the Avadi Malayan Emigration Depot area."